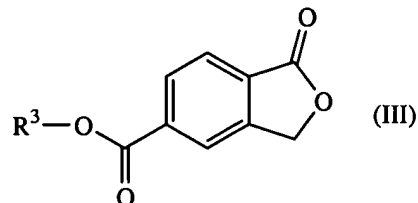


## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

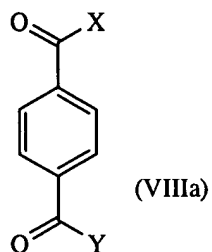
### Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for preparing an alkoxy carbonylphthalide of formula (III)



comprising:

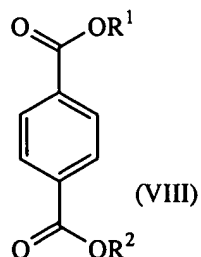
(a) reacting a compound of formula (VIIIa) with a formaldehyde and oleum; and



(b) ~~addition of~~ adding an alcohol of the formula  $R^3\text{-OH}$  to the reaction of step (a);

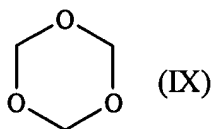
wherein X and Y of formula (VIIIa) ~~may be selected~~ are independently selected from ~~the group consisting of:~~  $\text{OR}^1$ ,  $\text{OR}^2$ , a halogen (~~such as Cl, Br, I~~), and NR; wherein R,  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are independently H or a  $\text{C}_{1-6}$ -alkyl; and  $R^3$  is a  $\text{C}_{1-6}$ -alkyl or phenyl.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The A method according to claim 1 wherein the compound of formula (VIIIa) is a compound of formula (VIII)



wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are selected independently from H and  $\text{C}_{1-6}$ -alkyl.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the formaldehyde is 1,3,5-trioxane of formula IX[.]



Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the formaldehyde is paraformaldehyde.

Claims 5-11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are ~~selected~~ independently selected from ~~the group consisting of~~ hydrogen, methyl, ethyl, n-propyl, iso-propyl, n-butyl, iso-butyl, sec.-butyl, tert-butyl, n-pentyl, and n-hexyl.

Claims 13-20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the amount of formaldehyde reacted in step (a) is ~~used~~ 1-3 equivalents of the formaldehyde per equivalent of the compound of formula (VIII).

Claim 22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the amount of oleum reacted ~~there~~ in step (a) is ~~used~~ 1-8 liters of oleum per kg of formula (VIII); ~~such as 1.5-6 l/Kg; 1.5-4 l/Kg; 1.5-3.5 l/kg, preferably in the range of 1.5-3.5 l oleum per kg of formula (VIII).~~

Claim 24 (canceled)

Claim 25 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the oleum in step (a) contains 18-65% SO<sub>3</sub>.

Claim 26 (canceled)

Claim 27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein step (a) is performed at a temperature in the range of 115 °C - 175 °C.

Claims 29-32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein step (b) is performed at a temperature below the boiling point of the alcohol.

Claim 34 (canceled)

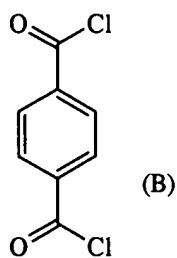
Claim 35 (canceled)

Claim 36 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, said method comprising purification of the alkoxycarbonylphtalide by adding ~~addition of~~ an organic solvent and an aqueous solvent to the alkoxycarbonylphtalide, ~~preferably water, thereby~~ and extracting the alkoxycarbonylphtalide into the organic phase.

Claim 37 (canceled)

Claim 38 (canceled)

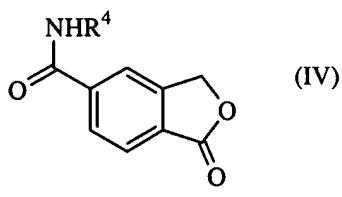
Claim 39 (currently amended): ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 ~~or any of claims 3-11 referring to claim 1 or any of claims 21-38 referring to claim 1~~, wherein the compound of formula (VIIIa) is terephthaloyl dichloride of formula (B)



Claim 40 (canceled)

Claim 41 (canceled)

Claim 42 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 ~~as defined in any of claims 1-41~~, further comprising converting the alkoxycarbonylphtalide ~~resulting from said method~~ to the an amide of formula (IV), wherein R<sup>4</sup> is H or C<sub>1-6</sub>-alkyl[[]]



Claims 43-45 (canceled)

Claim 46 (currently amended): A method for the synthesis of 5-cyanophthalide comprising the method for preparing an alkoxycarbonylphtalide of formula (III) according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-41~~.

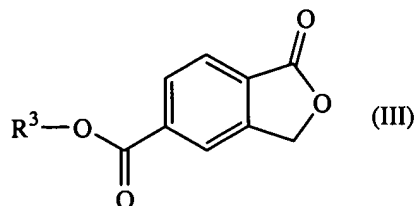
Claim 47 (canceled)

Claim 48 (currently amended): A method for the synthesis of citalopram or escitalopram comprising a method for preparing a alkoxycarbonylphtalide of formula (III) according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-41~~.

Claim 49 (currently amended): A method for the synthesis of citalopram or escitalopram comprising the method for the synthesis of 5-cyanophthalide according to claim 46 ~~of any of claims 45-46~~.

Claim 50 (currently amended): A method for preparing an intermediate suitable for the synthesis of citalopram or escitalopram, said method comprising the steps of:

- (i) preparing a alkoxycarbonylphtalide of formula (III)[[,]]

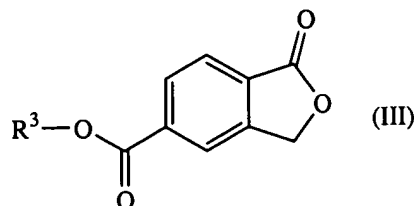


wherein R<sup>3</sup> is a C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl; and

- (ii) ~~subjecting the alkoxycarbonylphtalide of formula (III) to an isolation procedure, said isolation procedure preferably comprising a filtration step.~~

Claims 51-56 (canceled)

Claim 57 (original): An alkoxycarbonylphtalide of formula (III),



wherein R<sup>3</sup> is a C<sub>1-6</sub>-alkyl or phenyl.

Claim 58 (canceled)